

# HAPPY, CAREFREE LIFE OF THE PARIS BOHEMIAN

## Picturesque Doings of Men Who Have No Time to Write Books or Paint Pictures

PARIS, July 2. BOHEMIA has quit the Latin Quarter for high perch Montmartre, a kind of Bowery-Tenderloin and home of painters where a man can walk in the streets in carpet slippers and long hair, velvet suit and "live his life"—which means to sit about and talk.

In the bohemian sanctum of the Agile Rabbit they sit over beer in wooden jugs and take such pleasure in telling how a novel should be written or a picture painted that they have no time to write or paint.

Such a one is Philogone, who after two years' talk, produced a painting of such glorious coloring and so extraordinary in conception and execution that a collector offered him 4,000 francs for it just as it hung in the Independent Salon.

Unhappily Philogone had already sold it to a dealer for 200 francs, and the collector, having a conscience about giving artists their dues, refused to treat with the dealer and commissioned the bohemian to reproduce "The Thirst for Gold."

Philogone's course was plain. He had only to repaint the picture and get his 4,000, a sum that would keep him in luxury for three months. It was a wonderful picture. Men and women rushed up a path of pointed rocks from which the fascinating metal shone. A dazzling feline smiled at the blood from their wounds. Beyond the gold lay up cloud palaces—all the desires of men, while sad archangels fled from an accursed earth.

Philogone was only thirsty for beer. He got \$50 in advance, bought canvas and colors, talked a lot and daubed about—and tranquilly produced the first Cubist picture. The collector handed him \$100 more and begged him to do "The Thirst for Gold." Philogone went to work again, but now the thirst for gold appeared to him as a legless beggar and a blind man refusing to help each other get a \$2 piece that gleamed on the pavement, yet each in agony lest some one happen along and pick it up. The collector refused it and the painter finally sold it to another dealer for \$20.

Among fitful money earners of this type Bibaine goes his tranquil way a pure of the pure. The term applies to the uncompromising ones who ride a life hobby and turn out just enough work to keep body and soul together.

Bibaine's scheme is to abolish money—and the world will be happy.

"But who would keep shops?" you ask. "The shopkeepers, as usual," he replies, "folks whose tastes run that way and the lazy ones willing to handle nice things."

"And any one could take a dozen shirts without paying?"

"They would tire of taking more than they needed. They could not sell them. Why stock up when the shops are always there gratis?"

"Who would raise foodstuffs?" you ask.

"The farmers, as usual," he answers, "men who like farming. They would send their produce to the city gratis, having the right to take city goods needed without money."

"But people would be lazy," you object.

"Are the rich lazy?" is his answer.

"Only the poor are lazy because they are always tired."

By this time they choke Bibaine off with the question: "And the romance?"

At once his face clouds and he gets busy in a corner making copy. He is

into gibeollet. He kept the skins for his trouble.

For ten days the comrades were so stuffed with rabbits fricasseed in red wine that they told the Italian to set up a restaurant with the remainder.

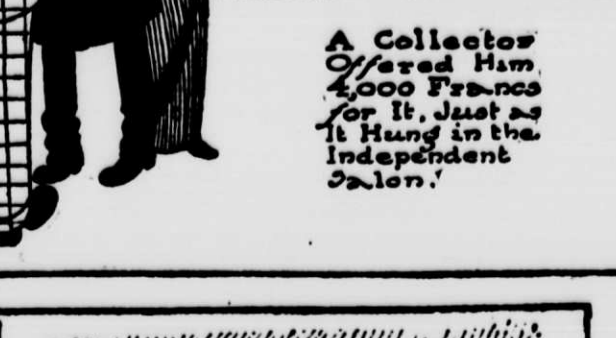
Such was the origin of the Agile Rabbit. The shack is rebuilt, adorned with



The Shack is Now Repaired.



"He is the Chief of the Disinterested."



A Collector Offered Him 4,000 Francs for It, Just as It Hung in the Independent Salon.



Bohemia Has Quit the Latin Quarter.



Philogone Went to Work Again.



Only the Poor Are Lazy.

## Origin of Agile Rabbit—Double Aureole of Franchard—Way Out of Money Difficulties

wrongdoer forces entrance" when the strongest member of the audience led him persuasively into the distance on pretext of bargaining for his patent.

Franchard began life as a university professor. Twelve years ago, at Nantes, his life seemed mapped out tranquilly, to lecture in frock coat and faultless linen.

Thus Franchard got the 100 lines he published in the Paris Journal and gave to us, not for lucra, but—it seems incredible—to "mix his poetry up with Rostand's" and delight that none could see the patches. More incredible, Franchard says that Rostand, while he brought his suit against the bohemian's changes that he kept them, and Franchard says that he is proud of this fact that the detail that they are his, not Rostand's.

Once Franchard took Werther (called the Sorrowful) to see "life" on the boulevard. Each imagined that the other had money, whence the historical complication of the King of Cambodia and Mme. Steinhell.

In the green hour of twilight, when the café terraces are crowded and the crowds dream over opalescent drinks, the two bohemians discovered that they owed \$2.40 and were without a cent to pay it.

"We must find something," drawled Franchard. "Can't you think?" Sisowath had just left Paris. "Sisowath?" mused Werther. "Sisowath—review at Longchamps—President Fallieres."

"I've got it," exclaimed Franchard. And in ten minutes the tale of the Cambodian King's admiration of Mme. Steinhell at the military review and his successful court was put on paper. Franchard ran with it to the *Matin* and came back with \$3 to liquidate the refreshments and get Werther out of pawn. But note that story cost the French Government 3,200 francs in cablegrams to pacify the King and the Paris correspondents of the world aggregated \$1,415 in cablegrams and articles.

Another time Werther and Philogone had fasted for two days, ashamed to abuse their credit at the Sucking Calf, whose business was running down and whose proprietor was almost bankrupt.

Then suddenly Werther came crying to his room mate:

"Suppose we fill the establishment for Maitre Georges, what do we get?"

"Our slate wiped off," said Philogone, "and some free meals for all."

"Then dress quick; we are moving to the Sucking Calf!"

Werther got the proprietor to buy them \$4 worth of postage stamps and high class stationery; and the two bohemians spent two hours daily writing short letters. Answering all the likely advertisements in half a dozen Paris dailies—the advertisements of money lenders, good will vendors, seekers of high class employment, offers of marriage, business partnerships and opportunities of all kind—they made appointments at the café restaurant of the Sucking Calf.

So for two weeks the place filled up with crowds of new customers, and local trade, seeing it so busy, swelled the temporary throng.

And the bohemians, what did they gain? Two weeks free meals for selves and friends. But the proprietor, he was a business man and quickly sold out the good will and fixtures at a handsome figure.

Which shows the difference.

After all this, what is a bohemian?

As far as I can make out a bohemian is a lingers by the way. Devoting himself to art or learning, he comes to prefer the pleasure of the journey to the triumph of arriving.

His motto is, "Give me the luxuries and I will do without the necessities."

rise in grade, espouse a girl of social place and money, write books, attend congresses, help rule a cultured set and bring up promising children.

Only the tranquility is realized. Tranquilly he threw up the professorship, stopped wearing cuffs, rented his old student's room in Paris and bade adieu to care and ambition. I have told you of his Verlaine poetry. Now I will tell you of his Rostand verses.

Skip ten years. We are in a little café frequented by minor actors of the Porte St. Martin Theatre.

All Paris was guessing the secret of "Chantecler." Foreign correspondents intrigued in vain for advance copies. Not even the great Paris dailies could get hold of ten lines. Then suddenly the correspondent of the *Milan Secole* and I received the entire plot and scenery, with 100 lines of Rostand's splendid verses, as a gift. Franchard had done it. Sitting with the minor actors in their

tavern porch, terrace, front yard, backyard and "artistic interior." The walls are covered with reliefs, paintings and sketches. Old Bruno is no longer a model but proprietor of an eccentric resort visited by even the smart set. But chiefly it is a home of Bohemia, where no brother is refused for lack of money.

"Cadmus will pay," they say, "now he is married."

"Franchard will pay," they say, "when he is married."

You note the shade of difference!

When Cadmus opened the Paris countryside to the Widow X, who was connected with a rich lithographic concern—the Pure smiled tolerantly.

When he led her to the altar they were even proud. The Bohemian can always marry money, say the Pure; and Cadmus proved it for them.

But Franchard wore a double aureole. For years he originated half the



Cadmus Opened Up the Paris Countryside.



"Franchard Will Pay When He is Married!"



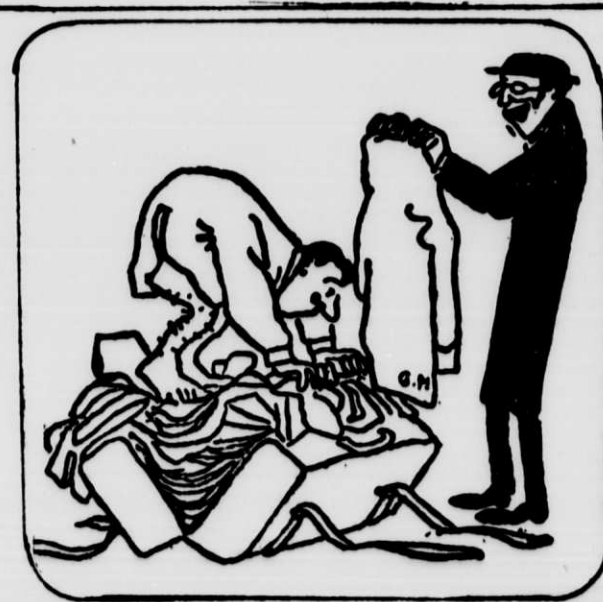
"Franchard Preferred Meditation"



"Prefer Their Independence."



Now Was the Time to Fix Franchard.



"Then Pack Quick."

always behind at the same kind of work—the production of the first rough copy of a historical novel, to be finished, vendued out, revamped, signed and sold at a high price by one of the three highest paid fountain writers of Paris.

No one can turn out the foundations for historical novels better than this long haired Bohemian, yet he has never made a success in his own name.

Not even the Agile Rabbit: it was really started by Bibaine and Lucien Sussanac. At a table of the Montmartre fair they won two pairs of rabbits, and an old Italian model who posed for white bearded saints and brigands gave them permission to fasten the rabbits in the vacant lot behind his squatter's shack.

There are still vacant lots and squatters on the Montmartre hill, twenty minutes' climb above the Moulin Rouge. There was no danger of the rabbits burrowing out all round the little cove were the massive foundations of new houses.

"Rabbits multiply," mused Lucien Sussanac. "In time I shall sell their tails wholesale to a manufacturer of imitation sealskins."

Truly Paris cannot get enough rabbit skins. And truly rabbits multiply. Lucien found a sealskin manufacturer, and twice he led him up to see his rabbits. And twice he touched the man of business for some \$25 mortgage money on the hill.

And rabbits multiply. One day the old Italian came running to Bibaine with a rabbit's carcass.

"They should! They had eaten all the grass down to the roots," explained Lucien later to the sealskin manufacturer.

"What could we do? Put them out of their misery, yes? Bruno cooked them

new ideas of the Paris press, and never wrote, signed or drew pay for a single one of them. He gave them to the brethren. Franchard had no time to work. He preferred meditation or even conversation.

Then one Saturday afternoon last October, hurrying to a train at the Gare St. Lazare, he saw one of those prosperous, well dressed brethren fall head over heels into a trap. With a basket full of bottles on one arm, Franchard had just time to reach down, jerk the threatened one to safety, lose his own balance, fall, and have basket, bottles and left arm crushed together under the backing train.

The act of heroism rang through Paris.

Now was the time to fix Franchard for life. The Society of Authors and Press Syndicate hastened to invent for him some nominal post with a good salary, while the ribbon of the Legion of Honor seemed certain.

Then Franchard celebrated his arm stump by one of those escapades which make everything impossible. He went courting a young woman non persona grata to the Council of the Legion.

"We prefer it so," said the Pure of Montmartre. "He is the Chief of the Disinterested."

At the same moment Franchard announced his forthcoming marriage. The lady bore a title and is wealthy.

"What will you?" say the Pure. "He never could bear rules and regulations!" It is all along the line of a fine unreliability.

Cadmus turns out to have been an expert at deciphering parchments, earning steady money from the French Government for the Ecole des Chartes.



"Suppose We Fill the Establishment."

Such a revelation as to "steady work" does not faze the Pure. A bohemian can do steady work on condition that he quits it. Cadmus kept no hours, or days, or weeks. He did magnificent work—and was magnificently unreliable.

They "prefer their independence," not only of marriage but of all that other men value. Work in the vulgar sense, to obtain vulgar success, is repugnant to them. They even disdain fame.

Witness Franchard's best poems; they are regularly written under other names. His spurious Verlaine verses at times outscar the flights of Verlaine's own. Once he sold the *Figaro* a pretended unpublished poem of De Musset that made the round of the world. Of late he has been turning out "posthumous fragments" of Mallarme that pass current.

Let me introduce Franchard. On the boulevard he is "the last of the bohemians"—there is always one—and his under-

study is the penultimate. But up the Montmartre hill the Pure chide him for wearing short hair and sometimes writing on order. Franchard replies that he often pockets the price in advance without writing.

Last summer he risked falling into temporary business success, but it was only Franchard's gay daring; he fell down irretrievably at Cahors just after they raised his salary.

To understand you must know that the vogue of open air theatres of nature has started up mixed amateur and professional enterprises wherever there is a classic glade outside a town and the hope of drawing tourists to flock crazily, as at Orange, or a troubadour love court, as at Arles. The only expense is to fence in the natural amphitheatre and see up benches and an open air stage in the style of their (half-Roman) ancestors.

Now the theatrical organ, *Comedie*, sees in all this a legitimate opportunity to extend its influence. It should send out a moderately long haired, enthusiastic, artistic traveling representative to appear suddenly at gala performances, "bringing the encouragement and support of the great Paris journal," follow with a sparkling résumé of open air theatres, prophesy a magnificent future for the enterprise and then disappear without a word of business.

It must be so artistically disinterested that a business man could not do it. They needed a reckless character to enjoy it, and Franchard was the man.

All went properly until Cahors, when Franchard became interested in a means to make a dash for it by interpreting to them with a nervous and incoherent eloquence. He had some on him that they might "smell for themselves," but had only got as far as "automatically" sprayed into the air of the room as the

café, the bohemian's prodigious memory caught every phrase and fragment of a line which they would now and then fling at each other until he could recite a couplet, laughingly or angrily, when his line or rhyme did not agree with theirs.

Luxury, as he understands it, is leisure to prolong the buoyant life of the beginner, full of vague promise.

The rest of us have passed out from student ways to the great world of struggle and reward. The bohemian refuses to pass out.

## WONDERFUL SHOWERS OF SPIDERS

Gilbert White gives an account of a spider shower that continued for nearly a whole day. Darwin saw one at sea. Each spider was supported, it appears, by a tiny parachute composed of a few threads of almost invisible gossamer.

Spider showers have from time to time been made the subject of scientific reports in this country. One of them gives this description of the phenomenon:

On the morning of this shower there had been some electrical disturbance. There had been one loud peal of thunder but no rain. At 10 o'clock there was observed a number of spiders that ran over the coat sleeves of the observer. He brushed off several trails of gossamer web.

Upon looking about he discovered that the houses, walls and trees showed these webs dangling from them; and that other gossamer webs were continually falling from above and adding to the accumulation.

At midday a fence was festooned from point to point of its triangular rail tops with a ribbonlike ladder of gossamer, and this continued to become

broader and broader as the tiny creatures continued to run along this ladder, each spider increasing the breadth by adding its own contribution of another silken thread.

All along this ladder the spiders were running in an excited and hurried manner, as if they had lost their way in a strange country. Some, in proceeding over their improvised road, made mistakes and got into the bordering webs of the garden spiders, by which they were speedily devoured.

At 1 o'clock the clouds vanished, the sun came out and the observer noticed that some of the spiders had begun to reascend into the atmosphere. Fixing his gaze upon one of them he observed that as it left the gossamer pathway it selected a clean spot on an iron railing and, gathering its legs closely together, projected its spinnerets, several threads that extended outward and stretched upward from nine to twelve inches. Then this parachute seemed to show a buoyant tendency, and suddenly the tiny creature let go of the iron rail, or was lifted off it, and quickly vanished into the air.